REMARKS

Applicants are amending their claims, by cancelling previously considered claims 1-3 without prejudice or disclaimer, and by correcting a typographical error in the next-to-last line of claim 4.

The indication in Item 4 on page 2 of the Office Action dated July 11, 2007, that claims 4-16 are allowed, is noted. Such indication is inconsistent with rejection of claims 1-4 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by the teachings of U.S. Patent No. 6,227,067 to Steeby, et al., and is inconsistent with the "Office Action Summary" setting forth that claims 5-16 are allowed and claims 1-4 are rejected. In any event, in the following a rejection of claim 4 under 35 USC 102(b) over the teachings of Steeby, et al. is addressed.

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indicated allowance of claims 5-16. Moreover, noting that claims 1-3 are being cancelled by the present amendments, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection of these claims 1-3 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by the teachings of Steeby, et al., is moot.

In connection with the subject matter of claim 4, Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection, respectfully submitting that the teachings of Steeby, et al. would have neither taught nor would have suggested such a gear shift operating device for a normally contact-mesh type transmission as in the present claims, including a guide slit engaged by a follower formed integrally with a shift selection shaft, to guide the movement of the shift selection shaft, and wherein the guide slit has a plurality of parallel slit parts parallel with the shift fork shafts and a plurality of slant slit part converging so as to come to a point at a neutral position from the plurality of parallel parts. Note claim 4.

By incorporating the guide slit as in present claim 4, in the gear shift operating device of the present claims, the shift finger can move in the shift direction and simultaneously in the selection direction, so that the number of starting and stopping operations of the motor for performing the shift selection operation is reduced, and the time required for the gear shift operation is shortened. Further, by reducing the number of starting and stopping operations of the shift operation motor power consumption is reduced. In addition, when the follower moves obliquely along the slanted slit part, the driving force in the shift direction also acts partially in the selection direction, so that the burden imposed on the selection operation actuator is lightened, whereby the selection operation actuator can be miniaturized and lightened. Note, for example, page 4, lines 6-16, of the Substitute Specification submitted by Applicants in the Preliminary Amendment filed January 22, 2004, in the above-identified application (hereinafter "Applicants' Substitute Specification"). See also page 21, lines 5-21, of Applicants' Substitute Specification.

Steeby, et al. discloses controls for X-Y shifters, and, in particular, two controls for X-Y shifters utilizing independent and occasionally simultaneous control of the motors used to control the X-X and Y-Y shift positions. This patent discloses the use of independent controls for each of the X-Y shifter motors, which allows initiation of a required X-X movement as the Y-Y position comes within a given range of its target position and allows initiation of a required Y-Y movement as the X-X position is sensed as coming within a given range of its target position. Note column 1, lines 40-46. See also Figs. 4 and 5 of Steeby, et al., and the corresponding description in column 3, lines 14-28 thereof. This description teaches that control assembly 68 differs from the prior art in that two independent drivers 70

and 72 are provided for controlling the motors 32 and 36, respectively; and using two separate drivers 70 and 72 allows for independent and simultaneous control of the position motors 32 and 36.

It is noted that Steeby, et al. discloses X-X and Y-Y control motors, with independent drivers 70 and 72 provided for controlling the motors 32 and 36, respectively. It is respectfully submitted that this patent does not disclose, nor would have suggested, such guide slit as in the present claim 4, having, inter alia, a plurality of slant slit parts converging so as to come to a point at a neutral position, and advantages thereof as discussed in the foregoing.

The Examiner contends in Item 3 on page 2 of the Office Action dated July 11, 2007, that Steeby, et al. shows the claimed subject matter where an actuator (38) drives the shift lever in orthogonal directions, "and is capable of driving the shift lever in these orthogonal directions simultaneously". The Examiner in this Item 3 does not refer to a guide slit as in present claim 4, and, in particular, a guide slit having, inter alia, a plurality of slant slit parts converging so as to come to a point at a neutral position from the plurality of parallel parts. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner has not even alleged a proper basis for anticipation by Steeby, et al. of the subject matter of claim 4, including the guide slit having, inter alia, a plurality of slant slit parts as referred to previously, and advantages thereof.

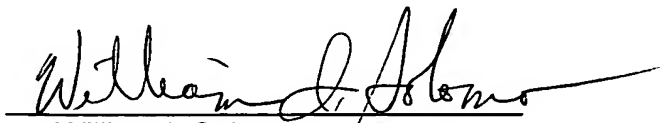
In view of the foregoing comments and amendments, reconsideration and allowance of all claims remaining in the above-identified application are respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicants hereby petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Kindly charge any shortage of fees due in connection with the

filing of this paper, including any extension of time fees, to the Deposit Account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Account No. 01-2135 (case 503.43282X00), and please credit any overpayments to such Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP

By 
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